



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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REMEDIATION AND REDEVELOPMENT DIVISION

INTERNET: www.michigan.gov/deqrrd

INFORMATION BULLETIN

GRAND HAVEN AREA LEAD CONTAMINATION INVESTIGATION

Hamtramck, Wayne County

May 2005

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this bulletin is to inform area residents of the soil sampling effort being conducted in the Grand Haven area of Hamtramck, Wayne County, by the Remediation and Redevelopment Division of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The reason for the sampling is to determine the extent of contamination that may exist due to past area lead smelter activities. This bulletin includes a summary of the DEQ sampling initiative to date, and a map of the investigation area.

To address any questions or concerns you have about this investigation, please refer to the list of DEQ and other agency contacts provided at the end of this bulletin.

INVESTIGATION ACTIVITIES TO-DATE

To begin the investigation, the DEQ first reviewed historic lead smelter information available for the area. They then sampled area soils from city/state-owned properties that the DEQ had access to in November 2003 to determine the potential for lead contamination. Sampling results indicated that soils in the Grand Haven area may have been affected by past smelter activities. A detailed report of this initial investigation was prepared in March 2004, titled "Comprehensive Phase I Sampling Summary Report," and is available at:

- Hamtramck Public Library, 2360 Caniff Street, Hamtramck, Michigan (earlier related documents are also available at the library);
- DEQ website: www.michigan.gov/deq, click on Land (on the left side of the screen), then Land Cleanup, then Site Investigation and Cleanup, then scroll down and click on Detroit Lead Smelter Site Assessment Project.
- DEQ SE District Office, 27700 Donald Ct., Warren, Michigan

Following these initial sampling efforts, the DEQ performed several additional activities, including a direct mailing to and/or door-to-door soliciting of area residents to request access to their property for soil sampling, followed by soil sampling of the properties in the affected area. During June and September 2004, the DEQ collected 279 soil samples from 143 properties. The samples were collected from the soil surface when there was no grass cover, or from directly below the grass roots. Samples were not collected next to houses or garages since lead paint that may have been used on these buildings could have affected the results.

Previously, Wayne County had conducted an investigation in connection with improvement and redevelopment of the area. Following the investigation they removed lead contaminated soil from a majority of the homes located in the areas bounded by Dequindre, Caniff, Grand Haven, and Commor streets in Hamtramck. Information on this work can be found in an October 28, 2002 report prepared by AKT Peerless titled "Additional Information for the Remedial Action Plan, Grand Haven Residential Redevelopment Site." This report is available for review at the DEQ's Detroit office, 3058 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit Michigan.

INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

The results of the June/September 2004 soil sampling indicate that approximately one-third of the properties sampled contain lead in concentrations that exceed the DEQ health-based criterion of 400 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) for exposure to lead. Concentrations of lead up to 1,400 mg/kg were found. The results support the conclusion that the contamination is due to historical smelting activities.

When a DEQ screening level is exceeded, further testing is necessary to determine the extent of

contamination and how best to address it. Exceeding a screening level does **not** automatically indicate a public health threat. Please refer to the Public Health Information section of this bulletin for information about exposure to lead.

PUBLIC MEETING

With the results of the current investigation finalized, the DEQ is planning a public information meeting, to be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday 24 May 2005 at the Kosciuszko Middle School Auditorium, 2333 Burger Street, Hamtramck Mi, 48212. The purpose of the meeting will be to present the DEQ's findings along with recommendations for future work, and to respond to questions residents may have.

PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

The mere presence of a chemical or a metal like lead does **not** mean that the chemical can cause harm. It is necessary for a person to be exposed to that chemical or metal (by breathing, eating, or drinking it) in order for it to have a possible effect. Also, how long and to how much of the chemical a person is exposed, and by what route (breathing, eating, or drinking) are factors that determine whether that person is affected.

Lead occurs naturally but environmental concentrations can increase due to its use. The most common source is lead-based paint, which was banned in the 1970s but may be present in homes built before that time. Lead also was an additive in gasoline, but that use was stopped in the 1980s to improve air quality and protect human health. Other potential sources of lead include hobbies such as jewelry- or stained-glass-making, ceramic ware, imported painted toys, lead solder in pipes or electronics, lead shot in shotgun shells, and fishing sinkers. Soil and dust near lead industries or lead-painted buildings may contain higher than normal levels of lead.

Lead is known for causing learning and behavioral problems in children. It can cause high blood pressure and affect the kidneys in adults. People concerned about their children or themselves being exposed to harmful levels of lead should have their blood lead levels checked. This is a painless and quick test. All children who are insured by Medicaid, as well as all children younger than six years of age (in Detroit) are required to be tested once each year. The Michigan Department of Community Health (DCH) can provide further information about lead poisoning prevention.

(Please see contact information at the end of this bulletin.)

FUTURE DEQ ACTIONS

The DEQ is seeking the cooperation of Grand Haven Area residents to perform additional soil sampling to ensure that all potentially affected properties are identified. Upon completion of this sampling, the DEQ also will seek assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the removal of soils that contain lead at levels greater than the health based criterion of 400 mg/kg (parts per million). Depending on the degree of EPA support that can be obtained, the DEQ will also seek state resources needed to conduct removal actions. Implementation of those plans will depend on the availability of federal and/or state clean-up funds.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

1. Environmental sampling/analysis issues specific to Detroit lead smelter sampling:

- State: Ed Novak, DEQ Remediation and Redevelopment Division, DEQ SE District Office, phone: 586 753-3827.

2. Public health effects of lead exposure:

- Detroit Residents: Gwen Franklin, Detroit Health Department Lead Program, phone: 313-876-0420.
- Hamtramck Residents: Josephine Powell, Wayne County Department of Environment, phone: 313-224-2658, or toll free (24-hour environmental hotline – local calls only): 1-888-223-2363.
- DCH Contact: Cathy Crawford, DCH Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, phone: 517-335-8885, or toll free (DCH hotline): 866-691-LEAD (5323).

3. Local testing for blood lead levels:

- Detroit Residents: Kathryn Cook, Detroit Health Department, for community outreach on lead screening locations for children under age six in Detroit, lead testing, or follow-up questions, phone: 313-876-0362
- Hamtramck Residents: Steve Tackitt, Wayne County Environmental Health Division; phone (for information only; blood lead testing should be conducted by primary care provider): 734-727-7432
- Other Wayne County Residents: Carol Terrell, phone: 734-727-7054

4. Key lead web sites:

- State: www.michigan.gov/leadsafe
(a comprehensive list of resource links on lead)
- Federal: www.epa.gov/lead

5. Key lead phone hotlines:

- State: (DCH) toll free phone number:
866-691-LEAD (5323)
- Federal: National Lead Information Center:
1-800-424-LEAD (5323)

6. Information repository for reports re: Detroit lead smelter sampling:

- State: DEQ Remediation and Redevelopment Division, SE Michigan District Office, 27700 Donald Ct., Warren, Michigan 48092-2793.
- State: DEQ Remediation and Redevelopment Division, Detroit Office, 3058 West Grand Boulevard, Detroit Michigan
- Local: Hamtramck Public Library, 2360 Caniff Street, Hamtramck, Michigan 48212

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, color, marital status, disability, or political beliefs. Questions or comments should be directed to the DEQ Office of Personnel Services, P.O. Box 30473, Lansing, MI 48909

